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ABSTRACT

This report on vocational education and training (VET) reform in Romania is one of a series of country reports by the European Training Foundation on the reform process in partner countries. Chapter 1 provides basic data on the country. Chapter 2 describes the present situation and recent developments in VET. It covers main features of the educational system, strategic objectives for VET, and legislative framework. It looks at developments in these areas: administrative structure and decentralization; finance; adaptation of training to changes in the economy and society; identification of skills needs; quality standards and qualifications; promotion of continuing VET; social partners; involvement of enterprises in VET; equal opportunities; access to training; and vocational guidance and counseling. Chapter 3 describes international assistance and cooperation, including the European Union's Phare (VET reform) and Leonardo programs. Chapter 4 covers these challenges and further needs: skills needs analysis, institutional arrangements, and qualifications and training methods. Chapter 5 suggests these priorities for further assistance: identification of labor market skills requirements; development of continuing VET; decentralization of the system; modernization of curricula; and teacher training in VET. Appendixes include key indicators, VET system diagram, legislative framework, responsible bodies, and international assistance. (YLB)

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Report on the vocational education and training system

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The European Training Foundation is an agency of the European Community which works in the field of vocational education and training in Central and Eastern Europe, the New Independent States and Mongolia. The Foundation also provides technical assistance to the European Commission for the Tempus Programme.

European Training Foundation

Vocational Education and Training Reform in

ROMANIA

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (http://europa.eu.int).

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication

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FOREWORD

This report on vocational education and training reform has been produced by the European Training Foundation based mainly on information provided by the National Observatory. The report consists of a condensed description of the present situation in vocational education and training and analysis of the main challenges facing vocational education and training reform in the country. It also outlines possible priorities for future assistance to sustain and further the reform process. The report will be updated in 1998.

In order to provide accurate, up to date information on the progress of reform, a network of National Observatories has been set up by the Foundation in partnership with the national authorities of the partner countries. These National Observatories, mainly hosted by existing organisations involved in the reform process, gather and analyse information on vocational education and training issues according to a common framework agreed with the Foundation. The Observatories are also responsible for the dissemination of their outputs. Since 1996, National Observatories have been set up in 22 partner countries eligible for support under the EU Phare[1] and Tacis[2] Programmes. The Foundation aims to set up Observatories in all remaining partner countries in these regions by the end of 1997.

This report is one of a series of country reports and factsheets which the Foundation is currently producing on the reform process in each of the partner countries. The Foundation intends to produce these documents on an annual basis. These reports are available from the Foundation and can also be consulted on the Foundation's Home Page on the WWW. Enquiries regarding the reports should be addressed to the Information & Publications Department at the Foundation.

Please note that more detailed information on vocational education and training reform issues in each country is also available directly from the respective National Observatory. Please refer to the list of National Observatories enclosed in this report.

Torino, October 1997

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1 In the Phare area, Observatories have been set up in Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia

2 In the Tacis area, Observatories have been set up in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russian Federation (Moscow and St Petersburg) Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

CONTENTS

1. BASIC DATA 5

2. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM 6

2.1 Main features of system 6
2.2 Strategic objectives for VET 7
2.3 Legislative Framework 7
2.4 Development in specific areas 8

2.4.1 Administrative structure and decentralisation 8
2.4.2 Finance 8
2.4.3 Adaptation of training to change 9
2.4.4 Identification of skills needs 9
2.4.5 Quality standards and qualifications 10
2.4.6 Promotion of continuing vocational training 10
2.4.7 Social Partners 11
2.4.8 Involvement of enterprises in VET 11
2.4.9 Equal opportunities 12
2.4.10 Access to training 12
2.4.11 Vocational guidance and counselling 12

3. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION 13

3.1 Phare Assistance in the field of VET 13
3.2 Preparation for Leonardo 13
3.3 Other assistance 13

4. CHALLENGES AND FURTHER NEEDS 14

4.1 Skill needs analysis 14
4.2 Institutional arrangements 15
4.3 Qualifications and training methods 15

5. POSSIBLE PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE ASSISTANCE 17

ANNEX 1: Key indicators 18
ANNEX 2: Diagram of the vocational education and training system 19
ANNEX 3: Legislative framework 20
ANNEX 4: Responsible Bodies 21
ANNEX 5: International Assistance 22

1. BASIC DATA

Since 1989, efforts have been made to establish the foundations for a market economy. But, economic restructuring (including the privatisation of state enterprises) has been moving slowly. The new government, has declared its commitment to further restructure and stabilise the economy, to speed up the privatisation process, to combat poverty and increase welfare spending. This includes a substantial increase in expenditure on education and training. In February 1993, Romania signed the European Association Agreement, and in June 1996 it applied for membership of the European Union. One of the main objectives of the new government is to align the Romanian economy more with EU standards.

Geographic area:	237,500 km²
Total population / population density / growth:	22.6 million (1996) / 123 per km² / increase 0.2% (1995)
Urban Population:	54.4% (1995)
Age structure:	0-14: 20.5% / 15-24: 16.7% / 25-44: 28.4% / 45-64: 22.4% / over 65: 12% (1995)
Ethnic profile:	Romanians 89.5%, Hungarians 7.1%, 1.7% Roma and Sinti, 0.5% German, 0.3% Ukranians, 0.9% Other (1992)
Languages:	Romanian (official)
GDP-ECU/GDP per capita-PPP-ECU/ growth:	93 Billion (1995) / per capita 4,100 (1995) / growth 4.1% (1996)
Inflation:	38.8% (1996)
Unemployment: **(ILO definition)**	8% (1995) / under 25's 20.6% (1995) / 25's and over 5.4%
Education budget:	4% of GDP (1995), 0.52% for vocational education and training

2. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features of system

Vocational education and training starts after the end of compulsory education (8th grade), at the age of 14. It is offered in :

- Gymnasium with specialised training (technical, agricultural, forestry and economics gymnasium), which after 4 years of study, and successful completion of examinations, provide both a baccalaureate (enabling access to higher education) and a vocational certificate (allowing school leavers to qualify for jobs at the medium-trained technician level)
- day or evening courses at vocational schools, which after 2-4 years of study (depending on the specialisation), and successful completion of examinations, provide a vocational qualification at the skilled worker level
- apprenticeship schools (run as part of vocational schools), which after 2-3 years of (mostly practical) training, and successful completion of examinations, provide a vocational qualification at the skilled worker level.

Vocational training is also provided at the post-secondary level, in 1-3 year courses depending on the choice of occupation.

During the period 1993-95, enrolment in vocational education and training stabilised at around 69% of all enrolments in secondary education. Within this percentage, there has been a slight increase in favour of the gymnasium with specialised training. In 1995, 43.4% of all secondary education enrolments was in gymnasium with specialised training, 19.8% in vocational schools and 6.8% in apprenticeship schools. During the same year, the drop-out rate was 4% and 4.6% in gymnasium with specialised training and vocational schools respectively but it increased to 6.9% in apprenticeship schools.

Vocational education and training has been high on the political agenda for the past four years. The aim of the reform programmes has been to depoliticise vocational education and training, to render it more suitable to a democratic society and market economy, to abolish the state monopoly of vocational training provision, to promote equal access opportunities to all, to offer a greater choice of career opportunities to young people, and to decentralise the system thus attributing responsibilities to all stakeholders (including the government, employers and trade unions).

2.2 Strategic objectives for vocational education and training

The government's current strategic objectives appear to be the following:

- To build a comprehensive legal framework and set up the institutional framework which will involve all stakeholders in vocational education and training
- to decentralise the management of the system and to share it among different players
- to increase available finance, through the development of a multi-resourced financing system (which will pool funds from the central budget, the local authorities' budget and other state and private agents) and the eventual setting up of a vocational training fund
- to develop an information system and mechanisms which will optimise the supply and demand relationship in vocational training, at national, regional and local level
- to base the training system on vocational standards as points of reference for quality vocational education and continuing training

2.3 Legislative Framework

Provisions for initial vocational training are included in the Education Law (No. 84/1995). A draft addendum to the Education Law has been prepared by the Ministry of Education and is to be discussed in the government. One of the most important aims of this addendum is to expand secondary education in the minority languages (see Annex 3)

Until now there has been no comprehensive and targeted legislation on vocational education and training. Continuing vocational training is regulated by legislative acts on unemployment. These cover the organisation, provision and gradation of training, retraining and further training courses for the unemployed and norms for establishing, organising and operating Training, Retraining and Further Training Centres for the unemployed. A draft law on adult education has been prepared but it has not yet been voted on by parliament, nor is it clear when it will be approved.

2.4 Development in specific areas

2.4.1 Administrative structure and decentralisation

The vocational education and training system in Romania is highly centralised. The Ministry of Education is responsible for vocational education and training within the framework of the formal education system. It develops strategies and policies, prepares legislation and manages public education. It also approves curricula, national assessment standards and school networks.

The School Inspectorate implements decisions made by the Ministry of Education and monitors activity in relation to these. It has an office in each county and in Bucharest. Its main responsibilities include the appointment of school principals, the development of teaching staff policies, the approval of occupations for which training is given, the monitoring of compliance with training standards and financial resource allocations to schools.

Schools are responsible for the organisation and implementation of training programmes and are accountable for expenditure related to this. They also draw up a tentative list of occupations for which they can provide training, which is then approved by the county School Inspectorate. Schools can develop contacts with local businesses for the provision of practical training for students.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and its regional representatives, the County Labour and Social Protection Directorates, are responsible for the (re)training and further training of the workforce (but up to now activity has mainly focused on training the unemployed). It develops policies, legislation and provides funding for the training activities.

2.4.2 Finance

Education in general is financed by a central budget and local public administration budgets (for the building, repairs and maintenance of schools). Given the scarcity of national sources of finance, extra financial (together with technical) support is being provided by international (the EU Phare programme and the World Bank) and national donors to assist in the education and training reform process.

4% of the country's GDP is attributed to education generally and 0.52% of GDP (in 1996) to vocational education and training. Almost all the education budget is spent on salaries so there is not enough money left over for capital investment. This is a serious obstacle to the reform of the system particularly if we take into account the extent to which there has been under-investment in education so far and the extremely urgent need for modernisation.

By law the Ministry of Education establishes the budget for each educational institution (including vocational schools). Funds are forwarded to the County School Inspectorates for distribution to the schools under their responsibility.

(Re)training of the unemployed is financed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection from the Unemployment Benefit Fund. The fund is largely made up of employers' contributions (5% of their overall gross payroll costs) and employees (1% of their gross salaries). About 20% of the fund is used for (re)training the unemployed. Budget subsidies also contribute to covering funding gaps.

2.4.3 Adaptation of training to change

Curriculum innovation is central to adapting initial vocational training provision to the new socio-economic needs. With the support of the Phare programme on Vocational Education and Training Reform, 20 occupation clusters have been identified and new curricula have been developed for occupations and specialisations included in them. The new curricula promote broad training (including foreign languages and information technology) during the first two years leaving occupation-specific skills only for the third year of studies. Also, new training methods and training materials have been developed. However, those curricula, and their implementation, have only been applied in 75 schools supported by Phare, while in the remaining schools the old curricula and teaching methods are still being applied. If all goes according to plan and if there are sufficient funds available, the new curricula will be introduced into the remaining schools after the end of the Phare programme.

In the area of continuing vocational training, action has mainly focused on the provision of training, retraining and further training to those who remained unemployed after the liquidation of state enterprises (for a detailed description see part 2.4.6).

2.4.4 Identification of skills needs

As the link between enterprises and the education and training system has almost disappeared, it is difficult to identify skills requirements. Currently there is no coherent system for monitoring labour market developments. A number of partial steps are being taken so as to ensure some kind of link between the vocational training system and the labour market. For example, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, via its Employment Office, collects information on the labour market so as to organise relevant training courses. Also, the National Statistics Commission collects information on labour market developments, which is occasionally used by training providers so as to make their own human resource development forecasts. The Phare programme on the reform of vocational education and training has also undertaken research on the topic. A labour market demand survey has recently been finalised and will become available to decentralised agencies with vocational training duties .

2.4.5 Quality standards and qualifications

The government's objective is to base vocational training on quality standards and thus to define occupational standards (on the basis of which curricula will be developed), assessment and examination standards. A tripartite body has been set up. The Council of Occupational Standards and Assessment (COSA) works within the framework of the Education reform of Education and is co-financed by the World Bank. So far, the Council has defined 20 new occupational standards, and 20 more are being developed.

In addition to this, the Phare programme on the Reform of Vocational Education and Training has also defined its own standards, for the development of curricula for the occupations that the programme covers. As occupational standards are now developed by COSA, the Phare vocational training documents will have to be reviewed.

New assessment and examination standards are still being developed.

2.4.6 Promotion of continuing vocational training

Since 1990 unemployment has led to the promotion of training for the unemployed. Training activities are planned on the basis of a national programme agreed upon annually. The national programme is following a bottom-up approach, bringing together individual programmes developed by each county with the help of its Labour and Social Protection Directorate.

At county level, occupations and training activities, are determined by the local Employment Offices. Courses are provided on demand for businesses that have decided to hire the unemployed, for the unemployed who have decided to start a business and by the local Employment Offices which take into account existing and future labour supply and demand.

Training courses are organised by the Labour and Social Directorates within:

- their own Training, Retraining and Further Training Centres (public entities financed by the Employment Fund)
- education units, which fulfil the requirements set out by the law for the provision of training
- other units/regie autonomes, companies, vocational training foundations, etc.

In the period between 1991-1996, the number of people who completed training courses organised by the Labour and Social Development Centres, increased tenfold reaching its peak in 1993 (approx. 49,000 people trained). In 1996, the total number of those attending those courses was 34,515. It should be noted though that few of those graduates found jobs.

At the moment the county Training, Retraining and Further Training Centres are trying to extend their training activities to the employed with the creation of new courses. Also, a recent Government Emergency Ordinance (Apr. 1997) on assistance in enterprise restructuring makes provisions for vocational training for both workers made redundant and those who keep their jobs so that they can update their knowledge and skills, above all in the area of new technologies.

2.4.7 Social Partners

There is no systematic involvement of social partners in vocational training at the moment. They mainly participate in decision-making and advisory structures, functioning on the principle of three-party membership, within the framework of the Phare programme on Vocational Education and Training Reform (Steering Committee of the programme, Advisory Group, Cluster Development Committees for vocational education and training). Therefore responsibilities for the development of both qualification and training standards are shared. For curricula, social partners have only a consultancy role while the final decisions remain with the Ministry of Education.

Social partners are also involved in decision- making structures set up by the World Bank co-financed programme on Education (Steering Committee, Council of Occupational Standards and Assessment, the Working Group for Career Information and Counselling).

The role of social partners is expected to become more important in the future when tripartite institutions are set up. These institutions are:

- the National Employment and Training Agency, recommended by the European Commission, and
- the National Training Board, foreseen in the programme on Employment and Social Protection and co-financed by a World Bank loan.

2.4.8 Involvement of enterprises in vocational educational and training

The Education Law provides for a school-enterprise relationship on the basis of co-operation protocols. In particular, schools can contract out practical training provision to local enterprises and receive assistance for modernising and expanding the school training facilities. However, in the absence of a legal framework and limited available funds, businesses are not motivated enough to invest in vocational training and so are only occasionally involved.

2.4.9 Equal opportunities

Work opportunities for women are poorer than those for men. This is indicated by the higher female unemployment rates (in 1996 female unemployment was 7.3% against 6.3% of the total work population). It is interesting to note that, for 14-19 year olds, female participation in education and training was 58.4% against 56.2% for boys in 1995. Moreover, relatively more girls prefer to follow studies of a general nature at secondary level (this has a higher value for Romanian society) rather than vocational education and training. In 1995, 41% of all girls enrolled in secondary education attended a general course while the figure for boys was 21%.

2.4.10 Access to training

The government plans to increase training opportunities for people who run a greater risk of unemployment, i.e. young people (under 25 years), people aged more than 50, the Roma and Sinti people, the handicapped, under-skilled, and those whose skills are outdated. For 1997, they are planning to organise more targeted training programmes for these groups of people.

2.4.11 Vocational guidance and counselling

A network of Psychological and Educational Assistance Centres, operating under the Schools Inspectorates in each county, is in place. These centres perform the following activities:

- career counselling for parents, students and teaching staff
- organisation of student guidance programmes (also for children in rural areas and those who are socially disadvantaged)
- gathering of data on occupation dynamics at county level for their guidance and counselling activities.

They carry out their activities with guidelines from the Ministry of Education and the Institute for Education Sciences. They also co-operate with the Teacher Centres, county Employment and Social Protection Directorates and other institutions with educational duties and interests.

A World Bank-financed project on Career Information and Counselling is being implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Youth. Its aim is to provide the young and adult population with labour market information. Career profiles for several occupations, interactive computerised career counselling systems for schools and training centres, occupational interest and aptitude tests, posters and a career newspaper are all being developed at present.

3. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION

3.1 Phare Assistance in the field of vocational education and training

Phare has supported developments in vocational education and training particularly with a 25 MECU programme on Vocational Education and Training Reform (1994-1997). At national level, the programme focuses on topics such as curriculum development, assessment and standards, teacher training policy, vocational education and training policy review. At school level, it focuses on the implementation of new curricula and teaching methods, the development of new teaching and learning materials, the specification of appropriate school equipment for the new curricula, etc.. (see also Annex 4)

A number of other programmes have also had training components, such as the programme for Active Employment Measures, the Repede programme on managment development, the Labour Market in Romania programme, the SMEs and Regional Development programme, etc. (see also Annex 4).

3.2 Preparation for Leonardo

The Romanian government has taken the necessary steps for eventual full participation in Leonardo. It has agreed the Additional Protocol to the Europe Agreement and confirmed to the European Commission that it will finance its Leonardo participation by using a mix of its Phare allocation and national budget resources. A national structure to co-ordinate Romanian participation in Leonardo is being established, initially within the Ministry of Education.

3.3 Other assistance

The World Bank Project on Education Reform is the biggest education initiative in Romania (with a loan of US$ 50 million). One of the activities within the frame of this programme which has direct implications for vocational education and training is the establishment of the Council for Occupational Standards and Assessment.

Apart from this, the World Bank has also commenced a programme on Employment and Social Protection (1996-2000) which includes the development of adult training (with a loan of US$ 14.6 million, matched by a Romanian contribution of US$ 6.5 million) and career counselling for the young and adult population (a loan of US$ 6 million) (see Annex 5).

A number of bilateral programmes have provided support in setting up centres for training the unemployed (Germany) and for management and business development (USA, UN, UK) (see Annex 5).

4. CHALLENGES AND FURTHER NEEDS

Romania, with the support of the EU Phare programme and the World Bank, has made steps towards modernising training content and has proceeded to create institutions which will support training development. At this stage it is vital to adopt a more systematic and coherent approach to the reform process so as to ensure a quality workforce for economic development and accession to the EU. This approach should seek:

- the development of a legal framework for vocational education and training,
- institution building, and
- the co-ordination of activity among different national and international players.

It is also important to ensure that lessons learned in the areas of curriculum development and teacher training through the Phare programme on Reform of Vocational Education and Training are implemented. This implementation should take two directions:

1. the application of new curricula, and the subsequent training of teachers, and
2. the adoption of the applied curriculum development procedure for further regular updating.

Nevertheless, attention should also be given to the obstacles impeding the reforms. These are mainly: the weak infrastructure of the schools, the lack of well -trained teachers and trainers and the limited available financial resources of the society (including households, enterprises and the state).

4.1 Skill needs analysis

According to the results of a recent study under the Phare programme on Vocational Education and Training Reform, only 40% of the qualification supply actually corresponds to the demand by enterprises. This low proportion requires measures which can facilitate more links between the needs of the economy and the training system. Developments in the different economic sectors (in terms of their employment capacity and technological advancement) and their impact on the labour market skills requirements need to be assessed regularly. A mechanism needs to be set up to ensure detailed monitoring of the labour market (at local as well as national level) and dissemination of the results need to be communicated to training decision makers (including central decision makers, local governments, schools, and other training providers) and people who receive training.

At the same time, continuing vocational training must be closely linked to the restructuring process at regional and enterprise level. Adequate provision of (re)training to workers who become redundant or lose their jobs (as an outcome of economic restructuring) needs to be ensured. This (re)training should be tuned into the economic prospects of the geographical area in which redundant workers are located. The (re)training of the employed also needs to be supported. Incentives to employees to participate in training activities, assistance for enterprises in developing their personnel training plans and the mobilisation of private sector training supply are just some examples of how this could develop. At the same time, the development of a comprehensive legal framework regarding the organisational modalities for training and the establishment of training standards for ensuring quality are needed.

4.2 Institutional arrangements

The centralised management of the vocational education and training system is considered one of the main obstacles in adapting it to the new socio-economic needs. The creation and implementation of a more decentralised management structure, which gives more responsibility to local participants and schools, needs to be developed.

This should be coupled with efforts to increase responsibility on the part of schools and social partners (at both central and local level). Today, schools and social partner organisations have a weak infrastructure and limited expert knowledge to initiate or actively participate in reform activity.

At the same time, the problem of limited national resources devoted to training has to be overcome with a long -term sustainable solution. The mobilisation and pooling together of the national financial resources and effective use of these is important in order to overcome the difficulty and could be aided somewhat with the setting up of a specific vocational training fund.

Finally, it is important to accelerate the setting up of the new tripartite bodies already planned by certain ministries i.e. the National Employment and Training Agency and the National Training Board. These will push forward the development of training options and will encourage the participation of social partners in training.

4.3 Qualifications and training methods

The identification of new qualifications which correspond to the needs of the labour market, and the subsequent development of occupational standards is an ongoing process which needs to be permanently promoted. The efforts of the Council of Occupational Standards and Assessment should continue with further development of occupational standards. A mechanism should be identified so that those standards are used for the development of new curricula. The experience acquired on this topic during the implementation of the Phare programme of Vocational Education and Training Reform is of primary importance.

The integration of new curriculum principles identified in the Phare programme of Vocational Education and Training Reform, into national curricula is of primary importance so as to ensure breadth of training instead of overspecialisation in just a few areas.

Finally, the further and continuing training of vocational teachers and trainers is an essential element for the success of new training methods corresponding to new curricula concepts.

5. POSSIBLE PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE ASSISTANCE

- **Identification of labour market skills requirements.** Support must target the development of a coherent information system for the monitoring of the labour market and the dissemination of the results to vocational education and training decision makers. The functioning of this system at the regional/local level must also be ensured. The National Observatory, as an independent institution can play an important role in the monitoring of vocational training at this level.

- **Development of continuing vocational training.** Adequate (re)training provision for the labour force is necessary (this includes training for the employed, the unemployed and employees in danger of unemployment). (Re)training should be linked to regional economic development prospects. A structural funds approach should be envisaged.

- **Decentralisation of the system.** Financial and technical assistance is required to develop a plan for the reorganisation of vocational education and training management ensuring decentralisation of responsibilities to local/regional government, social partners and schools.

- **Modernisation of curricula.** The new curriculum principles identified by the Phare programme on Vocational Education and Training Reform need to be disseminated and integrated into national curricula.

- **Teacher training in Vocational Education and training.** Financial and technical support is needed for the continuing training of teachers so as to enable them to adopt the new curriculum and teaching/learning methods and principles.

Annexes

1. **Key Indicators**
2. **Diagram of the vocational education and training system**
3. **Legislative Framework**
4. **Responsible bodies**
5. **International Assistance**

ANNEX 1:

Key indicators [1]

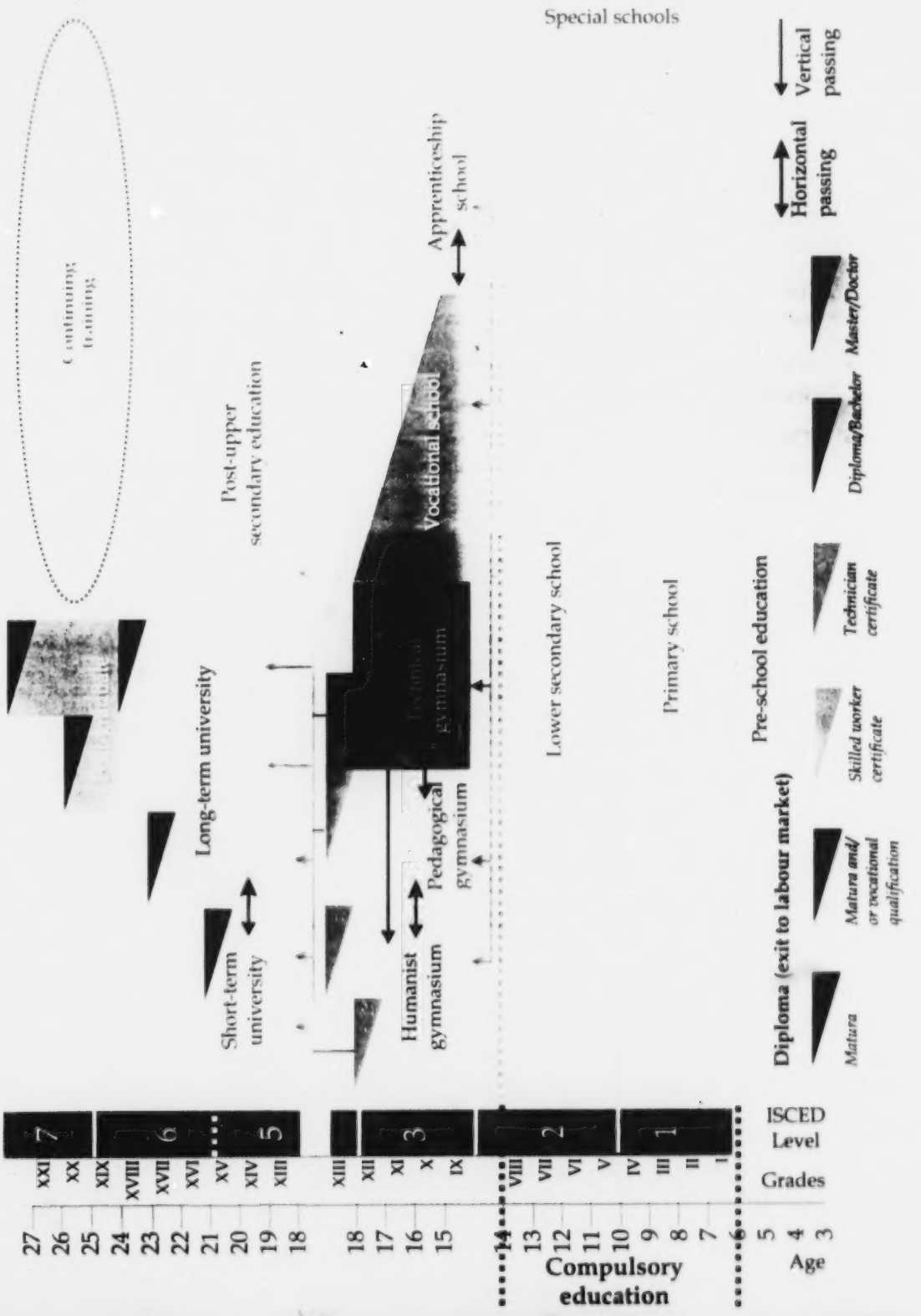
Indicators	1994			1995		
A. Access and Participation						
1. Participation in education and training of 16 year olds of which in vocational education and training	67.1% 68.9%			70.9% 68.5%		
2. Participation in education and training of 18 year olds of which in vocational education and training	24.5% 63.4%			34.2% 51.8%		
3. Relative importance of vocational education and training in secondary education (in terms of enrolment) Total Males Females	68.5% 78.7% 58.4%			68.9% 78.9% 59%		
4. Educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old) Total Males Females (25-30 years old) Total Males Females	n.a. n.a.	n.a. n.a.	n.a. n.a.	n.a. n.a.	n.a. n.a.	n.a. n.a.
B. Finance						
5. Public Expenditure on Education as percentage of GDP	4%			4%		
6. Public Expenditure on vocational education and training as percentage of GDP	0.45%			0.52%		
C. Labour Market Trends						
7. Number of employed	10.011.600.			9.493.000		
8. Unemployment rates Total Younger than 25 Older than 25	8.2% 22.5% 5.3%			8% 20.6% 5.4%		
9. Unemployment rates by educational attainment of the population (25-59 years old) Total Males Females	ISCED 0-2 6.1% 6.3% 6%	ISCED 3 7.3% 6.3% 8.7%	ISCED 5-7 3.5% 3.2% 4.1%	ISCED 0-2 5% 5.5% 4.7%	ISCED 3 8.5% 7.1% 10.5%	ISCED 5-7 2.7% 2.5% 2.9%

*est.

1. Data provided by National Observatory.

ANNEX 2

Diagram of vocational education and training system



This diagram represents the first stage in the ongoing development of a standard graphical model for vocational education and training systems. Future refinement may include the further alignment of terms, student enrolment and dropout figure, and local language terms.

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ANNEX 3

Legislative framework

- Article 32 of the new Romanian Constitution (Nov. 91) stipulates the right to education, the right of minorities to receive schooling in their mother tongue, the liberty of education, etc.
- The Education Law no 84 /1995 provides a comprehensive framework for education including provisions for vocational education and training.
- Laws no 1 and 72/1991, and their amendment in 1994, concerns social assistance for the unemployed and their integration into professional life.
- Order no 149/1991 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection refers to the modalities for qualification, requalification and improvement of the vocational training of the unemployed.
- Law no 57/1992 regulates the social and occupational integration of the handicapped, including protected job creation.
- The Government Emergency Ordinance no.9/April 1997 provides the legal framework for assistance in restructuring enterprises including the provision of training to workers made redundant and to those keeping their jobs.

ANNEX 4

Responsible Bodies

The **Ministry of Education** is responsible for vocational education and training within the framework of the formal education system. It develops educational policies and strategies, drafts Government decisions and legislation and manages public education. It approves curricula, national assessment standards and the school network. It appoints and recalls secondary and post-secondary school principals and is responsible for public budget allocations to school inspectorates.

County school inspectorates are the local bodies of the Ministry of Education. They allocate financial resources to schools, appoint and recall the office of deputy principals of secondary and post-secondary schools and the principals of all other public schools. They are also responsible for teaching staff policy (hiring or firing teachers) and approving occupations and specialities for which training is given by schools.

The **Ministry of Labour and Social Protection** and its regional representatives, the **County Labour and Social Protection Directorates**, are responsible for the (re)training and further training of the unemployed. It develops policies and legislation and provides funding for training activities.

ANNEX 5:

International Assistance

Phare Assistance

The Programme of Vocational Education and Training Reform: EU Phare is supporting developments in vocational training in Romania, particularly with the current 25 MECU (1994-1997) programme. The wider objective of the programme is to support national educational reforms aiming at preparing young people more accurately for the labour market. The immediate objective is to implement practical reform-measures in a nationally spread group of pilot and demonstration schools. The programme has four components:

- National level action and policy framework (training of inspectorates; developing international links between schools and EU institutions, determining new curriculum principles, assisting in the review of vocational training policy, disseminating results).
- Activities in 25 pilot schools (teachers will redesign the content of initial training, prepare new teaching and learning materials, modernise teaching methods, develop community- and school- based assessment and certification).
- Activities in 50 demonstration schools (the schools will receive the new curricula developed by the pilot schools, training in modern teaching, assessment and school management methods, resources for equipment and materials).

  Please note: the above two projects are now joined, making a total of 75 demonstration schools.
- Programme management activities (support to the pilot and demonstration schools and other relevant institutions.

Other Phare programmes:

Vocational training is supported by Phare through a number of other programmes:

- The **Labour Market in Romania Programme** (1992-95) included a vocational training component where Employment Offices and Training Centres were equipped with computer technology, trainers were trained, and courses were provided.

- **The Programme for Active Employment Measures (PAEM)** (1994-96) which aims to promote the concept of "active measures" at national level and support its implementation to the widest possible extent. The active measures include: labour-mediating services, professional training, guidance and counselling for unemployed people, assistance for small enterprises, information for unemployed people and companies seeking staff.

- **The REPEDE Programme (1994-1996):** aims to support management development and organisational change in companies undergoing restructuring orprivatisation.

  The main components of the programme involve strengthening and modernising the banking system, creating a venture capital fund and supporting company restructuring. The latter includes management training which has been extended to 30 companies. The training covers change management and business planning.

- **The Local Development Initiatives Fund (FIDEL) Programme's** objective is to strengthen the activities and know-how acquired through the PAEM Programme in order to support local economic development in Romania.

  Initiatives supported by the Fund will be selected by a partnership group consisting of all the key economic players.

Other Assistance

1. World Bank

The education reform programmes already underway with World Bank assistance (US$ 15 million) aim to:

- develop new curricula and restructure the teaching staff retraining system
- provide alternative school books for all subjects and grades
- reform the assessment and examination system
- redefine occupational standards as part of a government-employer-trade union effort.

The Employment and Social protection programme includes a component on Adult training and another one on Counselling and Guidance of adults and young people.

The Adult Training component (loan element US$6,5 million) includes:

- the setting up of the National Council for Adult Vocational Education and Training. This aims to foster the development of training services based on labour market demands as opposed to the highly centralised and supply- driven approach followed in the past
- the development by the National Council of a flexible adult training system which will respond to evolving labour market demand
- the establishment by the County Training Councils of the Regional Adult Training Centres (RATC). Both the National Council and the County Councils will have a tripartite structure in which each of the social partners has an equal voice.

The project will finance the training initiatives carried out by the RATC and part funding will be made available to other local Training Institutions.

The Counselling and Guidance component (with a loan of US$ 6 million) aims at providing the young and adult population with labour market information and material. Career profiles for several occupations, interactive computerised career counselling systems for schools and training centres, occupational interest and aptitude tests, posters and a career newspaper are being developed.

2. Other Assistance

Since 1991, 32 small business development centres have been created with Romanian and foreign (financial and technical) assistance. These include:

UN: under the ROM-UN Program for SME Promotion, set up by UNDP and Romanian Government, the Rom-UN Centre for the promotion of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises has been established in Bucharest, with 10 local centres spread across the country.

Germany: funded the establishment and operation of 3 local centres in Arad, Sibiu, Timisoara each including vocational training centres for unemployed people in wood processing, construction, electronics and agriculture.

USA: USAID funded 6 local centres, 2 located in Bucharest (Centre for Business Excellence, Romanian American Centre for Private Enterprise Development) and 4 others in Craiova, Curtea de Arges, Iasi and Timisoara.

UK: Know- How Fund supported the creation and operation of 3 small business development centres located in Bucharest (Centre for Improvement and Management Performance), Cluj-Napoca and Targu Mures. All these centres provide consultancy and training (on general management issues such as business planning, finance, marketing, customer service, human resource management).

- Other training initiatives have been financed under bilateral programmes, with for example France, Italy, Denmark.

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30

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